DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 150 599 CS 203 919

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TITLE Music: A Vehicle for Teaching Certain Aspects of the Elementary Language Arts.
PUB DATE 77
NOTE 31p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English (67th, New York City, November 24-26, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Bibliographies; *Childrens Books; Elementary Education; *Instructional Materials; *Interdisciplinary Approach; *Language Arts; *Music; Research; Research Needs; Student Motivation; Teaching Techniques

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to indicate the value of music as a motivational aid in teaching certain aspects of language arts. The first section reviews articles and books that deal with the integration of music and language arts activities, describes several possible classroom activities and types of instructional materials, examines research findings dealing with music and the language arts, and points to the need for further research. The second section provides a bibliography of the publications cited, as well as bibliographies of a variety of materials for use with children, including articles about music published in children's magazines, biographies of musicians, books based on classical music, fiction and story books related to music, Christmas song books and picture books, picture books based on folk songs and ballads, books about sounds, books that teach about music, and song books. (GW)

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"MUSIC: A VEHICLE FOR TEACHING CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE ARTS"

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Music should be an integral part of any language arts program. Music, as well as drama, serves as a positive teaching tool within the curriculum. Certainly, one must concede that movement is essential to any child's growth. Dance, movement, and drama would be greatly hindered without the rhythms and moods created by music.

Children learn about language through direct participation. Music allows a natural outlet for physical, mental, and emotional involvement. Musical terms are directly related to poetry and musical notations are related to language patterns. Music can be a positive aid in the development of language and the many skills and facets that it encompasses.

The main objective of this study is to establish music as a motivational vehicle for teaching certain aspects of the language arts. The first section will review published articles, books, classroom experiences and some available teaching materials as they relate to and integrate with music. The second section will summarize the findings. The third section will formulate the conclusion. Finally, projections for further research and coordination of music and language arts will be discussed.

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Music is a positive vehicle for expressing human experience. The rhythms and moods of music are a universal experience which all children can share. It can be communicated with or without words. Through music, children can gain conceptions about life and reality. They can learn to better express their feelings and shape their own self-identity. Music enhances creative and critical thinking, cognitive and affective skills, perception, interpretation, subjective expression, understanding, fluency in speech, discrimination and visual literacy.

Children can directly experience music and express their feelings at the same time. This opportunity is not provided for in the areas of the language arts. Sensory experiences create a rich aesthetic environment for the child. According to Grace Nash, "Music encompasses more disciplines than are possible in any single subject". In coordination, music, movement, and language can provide a sturdy foundation for a language arts program.

Patrick Groff refers to music "as a pleasant, diversionary activity in a language reading lesson". Music is more than a pleasant diversion. It is a vehicle for teaching the language arts. Certainly, music should hold a position comparable to that of drama within the language arts curriculum. It must be made clear that music is not being stressed in order to replace any teaching modes already in existence, but simply to emphasize its importance and that it should be used with more frequency in any program.

Many aspects of the language arts are directly related to music. These areas will be discussed in further detail in the major content of the paper. Briefly, listening, literature, non-verbal and oral communication, reading, creative writing, handwriting, spelling and grammer and usage can be coordinated with or taught through music.

Recent research in human consciousness indicates that the brain is divided into two hemispheres. Paul Brandwein and Robert Ornstein describe the two hemispheres in their article, "The Duality of the Mind". The right hemisphere controls intuitive thinking while the left controls sequential thinking. Music, art, and dance are emphasized in the right and language and cognition in the left.

It is believed that both hemispheres must interact and complement each other. Further, content must be stressed which will utilize both hemispheres. It seems natural then that music should become an integral part of the language arts program in order to cause a complementary relationship between both types of thinking found in the brain.

The main objective or purpose of this study is to establish music as a motivational vehicle for teaching certain aspects of the language arts. This will be accomplished through an examination and analyzation of recent literature dealing with the inclusion of music in the language arts curriculum. After a descriptive presentation of the literature, the findings will be discussed. Conclusions will be drawn and finally projections concerning the topic will be made.

Review of the Literature

Magazine Articles

In her article, "Music & Reading", Parthena Yaakob states that reading skills such as auditory and visual discrimination, imitation, listening, word meanings and relationships, and interpretations can be enhanced through music. She feels that auditory and visual discrimination must be integrated. This can be accomplished through the emphasis of pitch and timbre and note reading and visual discrimination between instruments.

Norma Liva cites examples from Children's Literature which illustrate all types of songs. She includes books such as Always Room for One More, Frog Went A-Courtin, Baboushka & The Three Kings, and Waltzing Matilda. She believes that singing should be used as a technique for language development because familiar patterns of speech are repeated and diction is stressed in the process.

Further, she integrates a number of music/language arts activities such as: relating the moods and emotions of music to poetry, creating dance to coordinate with words and music, creative dramatics as applied to "acting out" a ballad, the composing of music to fit with a song or a poem, writing new verses to songs or ballads, discussing the vocabulary of a song and developing short stories about experiences in songs. Certainly, each of these activities will be useful and motivational.

In her article, "Music & Reading Readiness", Dorothy McDonald states that music is useful in language and cognitive development and reading readiness skills based on numerous examples. She concurs with Ms. Liva that through repetition of words in music, certain letter groups are reinforced, thus developing language. She believes that rhythm can help in the syllabication of words and in better pronunciation. Songs offer outlets for discussion of new words and can be used to introduce sentence structure into which new words can be inserted.

Melody contour follows speech inflection and is a good approach for introducing phrasing. Certainly, sight vocabulary will improve and ABC songs will reinforce the child's alphabet.

Through musical experiences, listening and comprehension skills are strengthened.

Howard Klink writes that musical lyrics can serve as quality reading material and as free verse poetry. He states that "music simply provides an added dimension of word reinforcement". His approach is the Words and Music Program.

The lyrics, accompanied by worksheets, are practiced and read aloud. The songs should be assigned according to ability and readability. The worksheets are designed for comprehension, variety and vocabulary, and can be individualized. He advocates the use of Beatles songs, Simon & Garfunkel, and the teacher's imagination.

Leslie Kandell emphasizes handwriting through music. First, the children sing the lyrics and then they write them in their best script. The process is referred to as "singing and scripting". The lyrics are stored in premade music folders. She picks catchy tunes ranging from folk to popular that contain repetition and clear, simple words. Meanings of sentences, grammar, historical background, similar lines and spelling are discussed before the lyrics are copied.

James Doyle uses musicals and pop singers to help in the teaching of reading. The story and some songs are typed up and presented to the children sequentially. The music is played throughout the day. He believes that each unit encourages reading and discriminatory listening skills.

Linda Wendt and Janet Nash both feel that music encourages listening and writing skills as shown in their article "Song". When children write lyrics, poetry, imagery, rhyming words and form are encouraged. Musical ballads can be played to a certain point at which time the children can be asked to create in prose or poetry the conclusion of the story.

In two different articles, Emily Carey uses music as a teaching tool for language arts skills. While keeping a steady beat, the children respond in the past tense to verbs the teacher has given in the present tense. Listening is stressed through environmental sounds, taping of sounds and imitation. The children are asked to sing, chant, whisper, and speak different rhymes and poems which stimulates awareness of voice and aural discrimination.

In their article, "Language & Literature Through Music", Robert Volkmann and Gladys Uhl illustrate how musical concepts can be coordinated with literature and language. Volkmann uses such concepts as dynamics, tempo and timbre as music is composed by the children to fit poems. Sound effects made by the children are recorded and set to the poem. He further advocates that

"by counting the number of steady beats played to each strong beat, the meter of the poem can be determined".

Uhl shows that through the discipline of music, a child can learn to end phrases and divide syllables. One can start by choosing a simple four line poem and chanting it with the children. High and low inflections can be chosen for the words and a beat established. After choosing whether to use the major, minor, or pentatonic scale, the children should be instructed to put bar lines in front of accented words and then find the beat in each measure. Word lengths will decide the note values. The notes must fit the words.

Music can support a beginning reading program is a major premise of Mel Cohen's article, "Move Him Into Reading With Music". Songs give children what they find in early reading experiences. These experiences involve perceptual awareness, spacial movement, awareness of body and color, new vocabulary, different languages, and different registers such as high, medium, and low. Auditory discrimination is increased by listening to all forms and types of music. Finally, songs and poems can be used for dramatization.

Books

Grace C. Nash has shown through Music With Children and Creative Approaches to Child Development with Music, Language, and Movement that she strongly advocates the integration of singing, movement, language, rhythm and songs. She fosters the idea of "active music making" which emphasizes individual, group, and class involvement. Further, it is shown that music never deters active participation.

She stresses the importance of rhythm, an ever present organizing factor in the child's world. A child learns to express nursery rhymes, poems, riddles, chants and pig latin rhythmically with different accents and body actions. All of us seek a rhythm of speech or we will sound clumsy. The affective must join with the cognitive in self-expression. It is through this that an awareness of language is heightened.

In her books, words are exactly coordinated with notes and rhythmic accompaniments are devised for each piece. She encourages walking, clapping and speaking the verses. Singing is defined as "an extension of speech", where more emotions can be expressed. Singing prolongs vowels, connects consonants with vowels and it connects each letter sound in place of sounding words separately.

Many language arts skills can be reinforced through rhythm and melody. Spelling words can be spoken and clapped in rhythm. Word games for making up new synonyms and antonyms can be played while a steady beat is sustained. Certain words can be expressed

through the body to music (i.e., latitude and longitude). Oral expression can be further expressed through the involvement in speech games where speech is transcribed into rhythmic content.

James Moffet, who has written a book dealing with a student-centered language arts curriculum states that music offers stimuli which children can interpret through body movements. Music suggests moods and action and will encourage individual invention and spontaneous interaction. Songs will motivate pantomime and verbal drama. Rhythmic stress and shifts, fast and slow tempo, note lengths, long and short sounds, silence versus activity and dynamics are among the many possibilities which can be sequenced and used within the language arts curriculum.

Paul Burns, Betty Bruman and Alberta Lowe agree that musical activities can develop related language arts skills including literature in their book The Language Arts in Childhood Education. They restate what many authors have noted in previous examples. It is believed that music will provide situations which encourage creative and practical writing, vocabulary, oral expression, language and literature.

The statement "children respond directly to musical forms" is taken from Language & Thinking in the Elementary School by Smith, Goodman, and Meredith. Children can invent melodic rhythms to match a situation or an experience. Music lends itself to experimentation and discovery which leads to expression. Children can relate and respond to folk songs.

In three separate books, Donald Gingrich, John Batchallar and Mary Ann Mulligan share similar views on the importance of music as it integrates with other studies. Meter in music and poetry can be compared and each can reinforce the other. Moving words can be expressed musically and directional concepts can be reinforced. Pitch recognition can be developed into games where children must listen and follow directions in order to win.

Brain Way agrees with Grace Nash's viewpoints when he says that the "essence of music is rhythm". Without music, dance and movement would hardly exist. Both believe that human life is closely related to rhythm. Music should be an extension of the other content areas and skills a child learns.

Francis Aronoff further believes that children must experience the flow or rhythm of the music with their body. The musical experiences will be translated into the child's movement. He defines creative experiences as singing, playing, listening, dramatic songs, and moving.

Classroom Experiences

Certainly, literature and music can be easily integrated. The books can be classified under numerous headings which are noted in the handout. The booklist contains over two hundred books which can easily be incorporated into any lesson plan dealing with the language arts.

Third and fourth graders in three schools chose and read individually or with a partner, and then wrote a book report. The reports were varied with each type of book chosen. Some brief examples were: a traditional book report dealing with personal opinion and summary, writing new verses, creating new endings, singing the verse, a book of their own creation, explaining the folk song the book was based on, and many more. The reports were given orally as they were completed.

Poetry can be expressed through music. Different moods suggest certain kinds of poems such as oriental music for Haiku, Western for cowboy poems, and agitated for weather conditions. Further, songs can lead to original nursery rhymes, riddles, chants, and tall tales or legends. Original music can be composed after the poems are written.

Second graders in three schools wrote poems about their favorite animal and made a book. Each class composed music which was played as the poems were read. The poetry book was placed in the library for further use.

Ballads can be compared to stories and illustrated. Songs and books about them can be compared. Many children's books contain songs in the back upon which the story is based.

Contemporary topics can be introduced through song. Oral discussion and related books can follow. Death was a topic introduced through the song "Go Tell Aunt Rhody". The mood and words were discussed after the initial learning of the song. Follow up books were read dealing with death. (The Tenth Good Thing About Barney - Viorst & Sir Ribeck of Ribbeck of Haveland - Fontane.)

Movies and literature are in some instances based on musical compositions or ideas relating to music. These can be read to the class and then shown. Some examples would be "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" by Dukas, "Night on Bare Mountain" by Mussorsky, Patrick by Blake, Apartment III by Keats and The Little Drummer Boy by Keats. The musical mood can be discussed.

Halloween is a perfect time to chant poems in a "spooky" voice with rhythmic and musical accompaniment. Children can be motivated through composers such as Henry Cowell and Charles Ives. They can write spooky poems modeled after Bill Martin's Halloween books. Stories will have greater impact when music is matched to them.

One example of dramatizing a song is illustrated in "Setting Star", which refers to a ship that was lost in a hurricane. Contour and movement can be quickly related. Each teacher needs just to use their imagination as they leaf through any music book.

Rhythm games are used frequently. The number of syllables in words can be tapped out by one group, while another tries to guess which song it was. The syllables are emphasized and the words must fit the notes. Word insertion and substitution games are played whereby children insert a new subject or noun in order to change the sentence. Action words can be taught through music.

Vocabulary is continually discussed in new songs. Titles and their purpose are discussed. Musical phrasing is compared to sentence structure and songs are always read aloud first and sometimes written. Singing conversations should be used.

Children can write their own musical scripts. This process occurs through trial and error as advocated by James Moffet. The script should represent realistic situations.

Listening is a skill which can be stressed through music. In the classroom situation, children can play and sing voice discrimination games, (i.e., Muffin Man). Games can be constructed around pitch, rhythm and instruments. Children are continually being exposed to sound in music. Listening can be related to other classroom activities. Books concerning the environment and all sounds can be read in conjunction with music class.

Materials

A sampling of instructive materials which integrate music and certain aspects of the language arts will be mentioned.

HITS stands for High Interest Teaching Systems. It is a motivational approach to a literacy program through the use of proven popular hit songs. The instruction is self-administered through the use of an audio tape and an instructional workbook. Word analysis, vocabulary and comprehension are stressed with each level grades two through six. The spiraled approach deals with synonyms, antonyms, recall, main idea, details, sequence, cause and effect, inference, figurative language and comparison and contrast.

Another series, Threshold To Music by Eleanor Kidd, approaches musical concepts through body movement and aural involvement. The three levels are aimed at assisting teachers with little or no musical training. Charts accompany the teacher's resource book. The series emphasize clapping or walking the beat of a song. Word patterns are clapped throughout and new verses are created for songs. The children are instructed to dramatize songs and become aware of their position in space. Finally,

"inner and outer hearing" are stressed.

Kimbo Educational has introduced a series of records which emphasize music as a motivational media in teaching certain skills involved with language arts. James Earle and Willy Strickland have created jingles which stimulate "opposite concepts". Linda Anderson introduces the reading of poetry followed by a musical interlude which inspires movement. James Earle has a record "What's The Good Word", which gives numerous examples of pronunciation improvement through catchy tunes. Another entitled "Learning Basic Skills Through Music" has no author. It develops and emphasizes phonetic analysis, listening skills, vocabulary and word discrimination through music.

In the "Singing Sounds - Phonics Series" from Learning Arts, songs and jingles are used to help teach beginning phonics. The recording aids in remedial reading and also make learning of sounds easier. Numerous other companies carry packages which teach and enrich reading programs and oral language through music.

Findings

Most of the recent literature dealing with music and the language arts emphasizes the use of music as a motivational tool within a language arts curriculum. It is shown that music encompasses many disciplines and can be used to introduce and reinforce certain basic language arts skills. Music possesses a natural appeal for children which will in effect stimulate a healthy environment for learning.

McDonald, Yaakob and Klink are in agreement that music is useful in language development, reading readiness skills, and as a potential aid in a reading program. Certainly, aural and visual discrimination are strengthened through pitch, timbre, proper pronunciation, expansion of vowels, syllabication, note reading, differences in note values, and interpretation. Music integrates aural and visual discrimination.

In a recent article, Patrick Groff notes a number of weaknesses in the research designs of some studies concerning the positive effects of reading music as related to reading language. Edwin Movsesian, one of the researchers cited, responds by stating that Mr. Groff has misinterpreted his dissertation. Inferences were made that Mr. Groff should reread the studies quite carefully before making general statements. It seems evident then that music may induce better reading.

Songs provide an unlimited source for teaching children. The texts of most songs can provide numerous activities dealing with speech patterns, sounds, grammar, letter recognition, handwriting, context meaning, creative writing, poetry, syllabication, and movement. The list can be stretched as far as any imagination will go.

James Moffet believes that music provides one subjective stimulus which can be interpreted by one individual, a small group or an entire class. Music can easily be transferred into all forms of movement. A child will learn to manipulate his own body through individual spontaniety and free improvisation.

It seems highly probable that Grace Nash would concur with Moffet and Cohen as they describe the importance of movement. Language is used to express the rhythm within each of us. Children respond to sound through movement. Music is sound and offers numerous experiences for all types of communication. Certainly, the diversification of sound will enhance the child's visual, auditory and perceptual discrimination, emotional stability and body awareness.

Music should be correlated with acquisition of better general listening skills. A large percentage of basic and involved music directly relates to the listening process. It has been shown that students receiving more related musical listening experiences have improved their test scores on an identical pre and post-test given from the record Let's Listen. Learning to "discriminate auditory dynamics" will eventually establish a pattern for children in the other areas of the language arts.

Left to right eye fixation is reinforced as a child follows the musical notes and the beats. This can serve as a preparation for reading readiness. Dorothy McDonald describes an investigation by Nicholson which shows an increase in the scores of slow learners on the Metropolitan Readiness Test and the Botel Test of Readiness Achievement after integrating music and reading readiness activities. Music is also an asset when dealing with handicapped and disadvantaged children.

It was found in a recent summer workshop dealing with disadvantaged children that music was the most anticipated activity. Children were taught directional concepts, word order, and relationships, opposites and syllabication through songs. The activities stimulated leadership, confidence and the following of directions.

Many of the authors believe that music integrates well with literature. Many children's books are based on folk songs and topics closely related to music. This point is not obvious to many teachers. Children should be given the opportunity to read these books and react to them through book reports or original and creative endeavors. These book reports will induce critical and creative writing, discussion and handwriting. Finally, books and poems can be set to music.

Music lends itself to children's speech. The rise and fall of questions and exclamations can be sung using a minor third. Phrasing of the music can be stressed as it compares to the phrasing flow of sentences. The melodic contour of music can be used to introduce the contour of poetry. Music encourages expression of each child's feelings through its mood and text.

The findings indicate that music is a vehicle for teaching, listening, literature, non-verbal and oral communication, reading, creative writing, handwriting, spelling and grammar and usage. Recent literature focuses on examples which directly integrate music with the language arts. Emphasis is placed on the natural appeal for music, its expressiveness, and its uses as a stimulant. Recent language arts materials which include music stress its motivating qualities and the direct relation of musical skills to many of those in the language arts.

Conclusion

Music is an entity in itself. It can stimulate many areas of the language arts. Its position in a language arts curriculum should be similar to that of drama. Music conveys drama, literature and knowledge. One must note that dance is related to music, not drama. The body responds to the rhythms of music. Music is an integral part of the performance and life in general. Music offers unlimited experiences.

Children must experience life and be motivated. Language must be received and produced in many activities. Music encompasses recall, recognition, rhythm, oral and written expression, word games, movement, coordination, motor control, speech and language and dramatic play and drama. It links the five senses and gives any child a better feeling for language.

Charles J. Calitri, a professor at Hofstra University believes that a child should first find pleasure in his education. Music creates pleasure. Used as a mode of instruction within a language arts curriculum, music will evoke involvement, awareness, and positive reactions from children.

Further Research & Speculation

Before music is completely accepted in any language arts program, it seems evident that the learning objectives of music and their relation to language development must be better defined by specialists in the field. At this point, the specific goals and objectives are not always clear. The direction of music as it applies to certain aspects of the language arts is still nebulous in certain instances. This paper has attempted to clarify the position of music within a language arts program through recent literature, experiences, and materials.

More research is needed to strengthen the position of music particularly where it deals with reading and listening. Evidence thus far has been varied and inconclusive. Longer studies are necessary which deal with more subjects and a larger geographical area.

There is a need for a book which integrates music with certain language arts skills and its content areas. The finished book should serve as an invaluable resource which any teacher can use. It should contain songs and how they can be used in coordination with the language skills and any forms of literature which relate.

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